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23 February 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Proposed Legislation to Increase Controls on SovEloc Propaganda

1. A telephone conversation between the undersigned and Mr. F. Robert Berg, INR/CS/ILB, State took place on this date on the above subject. It appears that Congress is currently considering expanding the present provisions of the McCarran Act which places certain controls over the dissemination of SovEloc propaganda within the U.S. through the U.S. postal services.


2. The undersigned informed Mr. Berg that INR/CS/FP took the following position:

a. The present provisions of the Act appear adequate to do the job, whereby the FBI is notified of addressees to which such mail is sent; information (publications, etc.) of value to the U.S. Government which may be in such mail is made available to it on a regular basis; authorized recipients of SovEloc mail (both governmental and non-governmental, including university libraries and private research organizations) receive priority consideration and their mail is not detained; and the provisions of the export-import license law under Treasury's Foreign Assets Control Section tend to minimize the initiation of such mail traffic from within the U.S.

b. On the other hand, the proposed new legislation (which the undersigned has not seen nor heard adequately described) sounds as if it would require a phenomenal work force to implement, with results perhaps not offsetting the cost; would tend to hold up more mail indiscriminately, while screens and checks were made; interfere with the orderly passage of mail to academic and private research organizations, a considerable portion of whose research is paid for by the U. S. Government; and conceivably generate reciprocal action by the Sino-Soviet Communist Bloc, which may harm us more than our action may harm them.

3. These comments were read to Chief, Reference Branch this date.

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